

Applicant has reviewed the Examiner's Office Action. As a preliminary matter, British Patent Number 1931, referenced in paragraph 2 of the Office Action, was cited in error. This error was not the result of an improperly numbered patent and there is no other patent to be cited.

With respect to the § 112 rejections, Applicant has made the cosmetic changes suggested by the Examiner, namely, in claim 1, line 5, the language of claim 1 has been corrected to indicate that it is the second section that tapers inwardly from the shoulder. Further, claim 9 has been amended to correctly depend from claim 8. Also, in reviewing claims 11 and 12, Applicant noticed that these claims incorrectly depended from claim 9 and has amended them to depend from independent claim 10, as was originally intended. Claims 2, 3 and 5 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Turning to the substantive rejections, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 6, 7 and 10 as anticipated by Ferguson. The remaining claims were rejected based on a combination of Ferguson in view of Klinger under § 103.

As a preliminary matter, the applicant has amended claim 1 to more explicitly state that the sealing member is seated within the sealing member receiver during formation of the sealing member receiver. The original version of claim 1 described the sealing member receiver as being integrally formed and the sealing member receiver seated therein. Amended claim 1 now states that the "sealing member is seated within the sealing member receiver as the sealing member receiver is formed, said sealing member being compressed during formation of said sealing member receiver to at least partially protrude inwardly into the second bore section." A similar limitation is found in claim 10.

The Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's assertion that claim 10 is anticipated by Ferguson and, likewise, believes that amended claim 1 is not anticipated by Ferguson. In particular Ferguson does not teach an integrally formed sealing member and receiver that is adapted to load the sealing member. While Ferguson shows a groove for receiving an O-ring, Ferguson does not disclose integral formation of the groove and ring. Similarly, Klinger does not discuss an integrally formed sealing ring within the bore of the connector. In Klinger, the discussion of the use of a sealing ring is limited to the placement of an O-ring on the exterior surface of the barbed connector portion. Consequently,

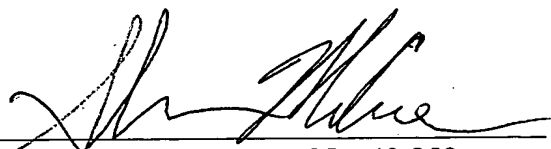
Applicant believes that amended claim 1 and claim 10 are allowable and respectfully requests notice of the same.

Claims 2-9 and 11-16 depend from claims 1 and 10 and are believed allowable at least based on their dependency. These claims contain further basis for allowability. For example, claim 5 adds the limitation that the barbed receiver be formed such that at least a portion of that receiver does not have a parting line which facilitates connection of tubes to that receiver and reduces the likelihood of damage to the tube. Further, claim 9 includes the limitation that in an elbow configuration, a flange extends partially into the bore between the first and second corners of a bend to prevent overinsertion of a conduit. Since these features are not disclosed in the applied patents, the applicant believes that they provide independent basis for allowability.

To provide an independent claim directed toward the feature of claim 9, Applicant has added new claim 21 for the Examiner's consideration. Claim 21 generally claims a connector having a bend between its first and second ends with the patentable feature of a flange that extends into the bore between the first and second corners of the bend to prevent overinsertion of the conduit.

In light of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the Examiner's rejections. Applicant believes that claims 1-16 and 21 are in condition for allowance and respectfully requests notice of the same. If any issues remain, Applicant would appreciate a telephone call to the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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